Telephone services in West Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh

981. SHRI YERRA NARAYANASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether telecom facilities have been deteriorated in West Gadavari District in Andhra Pradesh so far during current financial year;

(b) whether it is a fact poor maintenance has led to bad telephone service in this area;

(c) whether Government propose to imporve the maintenance of telecom facilities in West Godavari district; and

(d) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Telephone services in the West Godavari District are satisfactory and these are being maintained properly.

(c) Yes, Sir. It is a continuous process.

(d) Efforts are being made to improve the services further by introduction of modern technology exchange, replacement of old, worn-out and life expired equipments upgradation of external plants, computerisation of various services, provision of reliable trunk media through successive Annual Plans and Five Years Plans.

Measures to meet the demand of Processed Food

982. SHRI GOPALSINH. G. SOLANKI: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) Government's present policy regarding Food Processing;

(b) whether demand for processed food items is increasing;

(c) if so, in what manner Government propose to meet the demand; and

(d) the details of measures taken to make processed food items available to the urban working class at affordable rates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO): (a) to (d) Food Processing Industries are being developed within the ambit of Industrial Policy Resolution of 1991. Food Processing Industries are mainly in the private and cooperative sectors and the Government policy is to encourage the development of this sector in the private, cooperative and joint/ assisted sectors.

Due to various socio-economic factors, the demand for processed foods in the country is rising. The Government has removed restrictions of capacity creation etc. though licensing in all food products excepting for brewing and distillation of alcoholic beverages and items reserved for small scale sector. Besides, the Government had provided fiscal concessions to a large number of processed food items, machineries and packaging materials. The procedures for

foreign technology acquisition have been simplified. Foreign equity investment upto 51% for all the items in the Annexure-III of Industrial Policy Resolution, 1991 had been made automatic. Foreign investment in other commodities is also considered on merit. Besides, Ministry is also operating various Plan Schemes for the overall development of processed food products. These measures are expected to increase investment and production of processed food products to meet the demand.

Deterrent Law to Deal with Criminals

983. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that cases of rape, murder, abduction and other crimes are increasing in the country at present and on the other hand conviction rate in respect of these crimes is coming down due to liberal grant of bail to the suspects in such cases;

(b) whether it is a fact that the number of criminal cases has been piled up from 99.2 lakh in 1980 to 121.6 lakh in 1992;

(c) whether Government have taken a note of these facts; and

(d) if so, whether Government propose to bring in a more deterrent law in the country and if so, when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (PROF. M. KAMSON): (a) to (d) Even though 'Police' and 'Public order' are subjects of the State list under the Constitution and the prevention of crime is primarily the concern of State Governments/UT Administrations, the Central Government is aware of and concerned with the deficiencies of the Criminal Justice system in India which lead to accumulation of large number of criminal cases pending in Courts. In order to deal with the problem several steps have been taken under the Administration of Criminal Justice by the Government from time to time including, *inter-alia*, making administration of Justice an item of plan expenditure with a view to removing infrastructural bottlenecks for expeditious disposal of cases. A meeting of the Chief Ministers and Chief Justices was also convened on 4th December, 1993 in which a resolution was passed recommending adoption of certain steps, for speedy disposal of cases in Courts/Tribunals. These were accepted by the Government and commended to all the State Governments/UT Administrations and High Courts/ Tribunals for necessary follow-up action.

Request by Chakma Refugees for Indian Citizenship

984. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a news-item published in The Hindustan Times dated the 14th November, 1995 captioned Chakma issue puts centre in a spot as Arunachal Pradesh Government, are demanding shifting of Chakmas and the Chakmas have been asking for Indian citizenship whose number has grown to 31,140 and claim their total number 65,000 now; and

(b) if so, what steps Central Government propose to take to avoid violence and ethnic clashes in the State as Government of Arunachal Pradesh has threatened to quit on the 31st December, 1995; if the Centre does not shift the Chakmas from the soil?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SYED SIBTEY RAZI): (a) The news item has come to the notice of the Government.

(b) The Government of Arunachal Pradesh has been advised to ensure the security and safety of all residents in the State including the Chakma and Hajong refugees. Central Para Military Forces units have already been placed at the disposal of the State Government for this purpose. Based on a complaint filed by